

VZCZCXRO9178  
PP RUEHSK RUEHSL  
DE RUEHVEN #0166/01 1971432  
ZNR UUUUU ZZH  
P 161432Z JUL 09  
FM USMISSION USOSCE  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 6491  
INFO RUCNCFE/CONVENTIONAL ARMED FORCES IN EUROPE  
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC  
RUEKJCS/DIA WASHDC  
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC  
RUEASWA/DTRA ALEX WASHINGTON DC//OSAE  
RUESDT/DTRA-OSSES DARMSTADT GE  
RHMFISS/CDR USEUCOM VAIHINGEN GE  
RUEKJCS/JOINT STAFF WASHDC//J5-DDPMA-IN/CAC/DDPMA-E//  
RUEAHQA/HQ USAF WASHINGTON DC//XONP//

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 03 USOSCE 000166

SENSITIVE  
SIPDIS

STATE FOR VCI/CCA, EUR/RPM  
NSC FOR NILSSON, HAYDEN  
JCS FOR J5 NORWOOD, COL SMITH  
OSD FOR ISA (WALLENDER)

E.O. 12958: N/A  
TAGS: [KCFE](#) [OSCE](#) [PARM](#) [PREL](#)  
SUBJECT: CFE/JCG: 14 JULY PLENARY - RUSSIA RE-SETS OLD  
ARGUMENTS

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for Internet.

11. (SBU) Summary: On the occasion of the 700th JCG Plenary,  
the Belarus Chair made some remarks highlighting the  
importance the JCG itself has played in the history of the  
Treaty. Russia said there were no grounds to be proud of the  
JCG during the last 10 years, and hopes the situation will  
improve before the 750th meeting. Russia continued its  
itemized discussion of the May 2009 Aide Memoir (points 4, 5,  
and 6), focusing on the need to: 1) lower the ceiling numbers  
for NATO states; 2) negotiate the terms of accession for the  
Baltic states and Slovenia; and 3) agree on definition of  
substantial combat forces. Allies pressed Russia to cease  
making non-legal compliance claims against NATO states, and  
to provide any such claims in writing on a State-basis,  
rather than group basis. The U.S. cited Russia's  
non-compliance with another inspection refusal. End Summary.

700th JCG Plenary ) Russia re-sets old arguments  
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12. (SBU) The Belarus Chair (Krayushkin) opened the 14 July  
Plenary by attempting to highlight the occasion of the 700th  
Joint Consultative Group (JCG) meeting. Conducting the  
meeting in English, Belarus noted that the JCG has played an  
important role in the history of the Treaty, and urged that  
we keep the JCG as a unique place to further dialogue.  
Russia (Ulyanov) spoiled the mood by noting usually positive  
things are said for such anniversaries, but there are no  
grounds to be proud of the last 10 years. Russia hopes  
things will improve before the 750th meeting.

Russian Aide-memoire diatribe continues  
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13. (SBU) Ulyanov then launched into familiar discussion of  
points 4, 5, and 6 of its May 2009 aide-memoir. He began by  
saying it is necessary to agree on lower numbers of armaments  
for NATO states. This is linked to the main thesis of the  
Treaty that prevents domination by one party or group of  
parties. NATO expansion resulted in imbalances. Although  
the real level of holdings is below the ceilings of a/CFE,  
the current ceilings nevertheless represent the potential for  
higher levels. These ceilings are no longer acceptable and  
allow NATO to dominate. Russia wants to negotiate reductions  
in these ceilings.

4.(SBU) Ulyanov emphasized that aggregate holdings in NATO states (22) should not exceed group ceilings per Article 4 and 5 of the existing Treaty (NATO 16). He noted this point is not in the aide memoire, but that does not mean they have not given up on this concept. He said it is not possible to resolve this between U.S. and Russia only, it must be tackled in the JCG.

5.(SBU) Regarding point 5 on terms of accession by new NATO states, Ulyanov said that when the new NATO states applied for NATO accession, they also should have applied for CFE membership. Russia knows they affirmed their readiness to join a/CFE, and it is now time to negotiate the terms for them to do so, including their national and territorial ceilings and concrete number for holdings. Their accession should not allow any increase in capacity, but rather limitations and/or reductions. Although their current numbers are relatively low, there still needs to be agreement on maximum numbers. The first draft of the parallel action plan in August 2007 assumed that the Baltic States would start consultations with Russia on these terms by August 2008, but that proposal has been put aside. Russia would like clarity on when that will begin.

6.(SBU) On point 6, Ulyanov reiterated that a definition of substantial combat forces is still required. This concept was enshrined in the May 21, 1997 NATO-Russia Founding Act, and was later reaffirmed in an important statement by NATO in March 1998. This definition played a leading role in reaching agreement on a/CFE, however as of today we still do not know what it actually means. Last year at the 649th JCG

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plenary, Russia provided its views on specific parameters for the definition. There have been 51 plenary opportunities to discuss and resolve this issue, but it has not happened. Some have suggested negotiating at the NATO-Russia Council, but that venue does not include all the States Parties.

Allies Respond to Russia old-think, Point to A/CFE

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7.(SBU) Germany (Schweitzer) replied briefly by noting that Russia's comparison of current and a/CFE ceilings between groups is a vestige of cold war thinking, and confrontational in nature. A/CFE was supposed to take us away from groups to national and territorial approaches aimed at avoiding sub-regional concentration of troops, not just in the flanks. We could overcome this antagonism by bringing a/CFE into force. He also said it was unrealistic to expect the new NATO states to accede to the current Treaty, and it is better to aim for a/CFE to resolve this issue.

8.(SBU) Drawing on standing guidance, U.S. (Neighbour) remarked that regarding the 700th JCG meeting, the U.S. continues to value the CFE Treaty, and remains committed to getting a/CFE into force. Neighbour emphasized that there is no requirement that a country acceding to the Washington Treaty also join CFE. Changing the group structure was addressed in a/CFE. He stressed that 16 states under the current Treaty are in compliance with the Treaty. There is no provision to count the forces of 22 states against the numbers of the 16 states in the Western group. Furthermore, the current Treaty does not have an accession clause. All the new NATO states have said they intend to join a/CFE, and their military information has been provided to all under Vienna Document. There is no sense to go backwards on this subject, we should look to the future. We are seeking constructive engagement with Russia, including at upcoming meetings planned at the end of August. Russia rejoined by saying others think a/CFE will solve all the problems, but a/CFE has not entered into force because certain States have not implemented their Istanbul Commitments. Russia is ready to work intensively on the parallel action plan, and hopes substantive discussion can resume in the fall in the JCG.

Russian inspection refusal noted again

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9.(SBU) The U.S. made a statement regarding Russia,s recent refusal of another CFE inspection request (JCG.JOUR/700, Annex). Several Allies spoke in support of the U.S. intervention, stressing that it makes all the more difficult to achieve a/CFE in the face of the ongoing Russian refusals (UK, Czech, France, Belgium, Portugal, Italy, Turkey, Georgia, and Denmark.)

Russia speaks again about NATO violation of limitations  
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10.(SBU) Under the agenda item on limitations, Russia (Ulyanov) again raised concerns about serious violations by 22 States, charging the group with noncompliance. The violations have been ongoing for many years, and Russia wants to know when and how the group will respond. The UK (Gare) noted that these repeated Russian claims have not been included in the JCG Journals, and none of the claims has been addressed to a specific State Party. If Russia has specific claims regarding noncompliance with Treaty limitations by the United Kingdom, then it would like to receive them in writing with appropriate Treaty references.

11.(SBU) Ulyanov snidely pointed out that the UK has forgotten that we are dealing with the old (current) Treaty, since others have not ratified a/CFE. He reminded the UK that the Treaty had two groups, one of which expanded, and the other no longer exists. All Russian claims were annexed to the Journals of the third Review Conference. These statements outline specific violations by groups.

12.(SBU) The U.S. supported the UK statement and pointed out that the current forces of NATO states at 22 is smaller today than the original members in 1990. For example, at the end

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of the reduction period when limits took effect in November 1995, the U.S. had 2,238 ACVs, of the 5,372 allowed. Now the U.S. has less than 700 ACVs, of 5,152 permitted. In 1995, Russia had 10,372 ACVs of 11,480 permitted, and as of December 2007, it had 9,871 out of 11,280 permitted.

13.(SBU) Italy (Negro) pointed out that the current Treaty was signed by individual State Parties, not a group of States. Under international law, only States Parties can be in violations, not a group of States. Therefore, the Russian claims are baseless and only &philosophical8 in nature. Germany (Schweitzer) expressed interest, again, on just what figures Russia is using to make such claims. He asked again for a synopsis from the Russian delegation so we can how these comparisons are being made. If Russia wants to keep thinking in bloc-to-bloc format, we need current Russian information exchange data to understand the current state of play.

14.(SBU) Ulyanov bemoaned the fact that despite its numerous statements, there is a lack of understanding. Ceilings for the Western group were breached when additional states joined NATO. Therefore the current aggregate ceilings for all current NATO states substantially surpasses the old (current) CFE numbers. The UK (Gare) agreed with Italy that the Russian thinking was merely philosophical, rather than legally-based. Turkey (Begec) mentioned that since the basis for Russian claims is flawed, so are its conclusions. Turkey concluded that there is nothing in CFE to substantiate the Russian claims.

15.(SBU) Insistent on getting the last word again, Ulyanov expressed satisfaction that a substantive dialog had taken place regarding the real violations of others, rather than the other fictitious cases of non-compliance raised e.g., Russia inspection refusals. Unfortunately, Russia,s partners prefer to ignore the facts.  
Scott